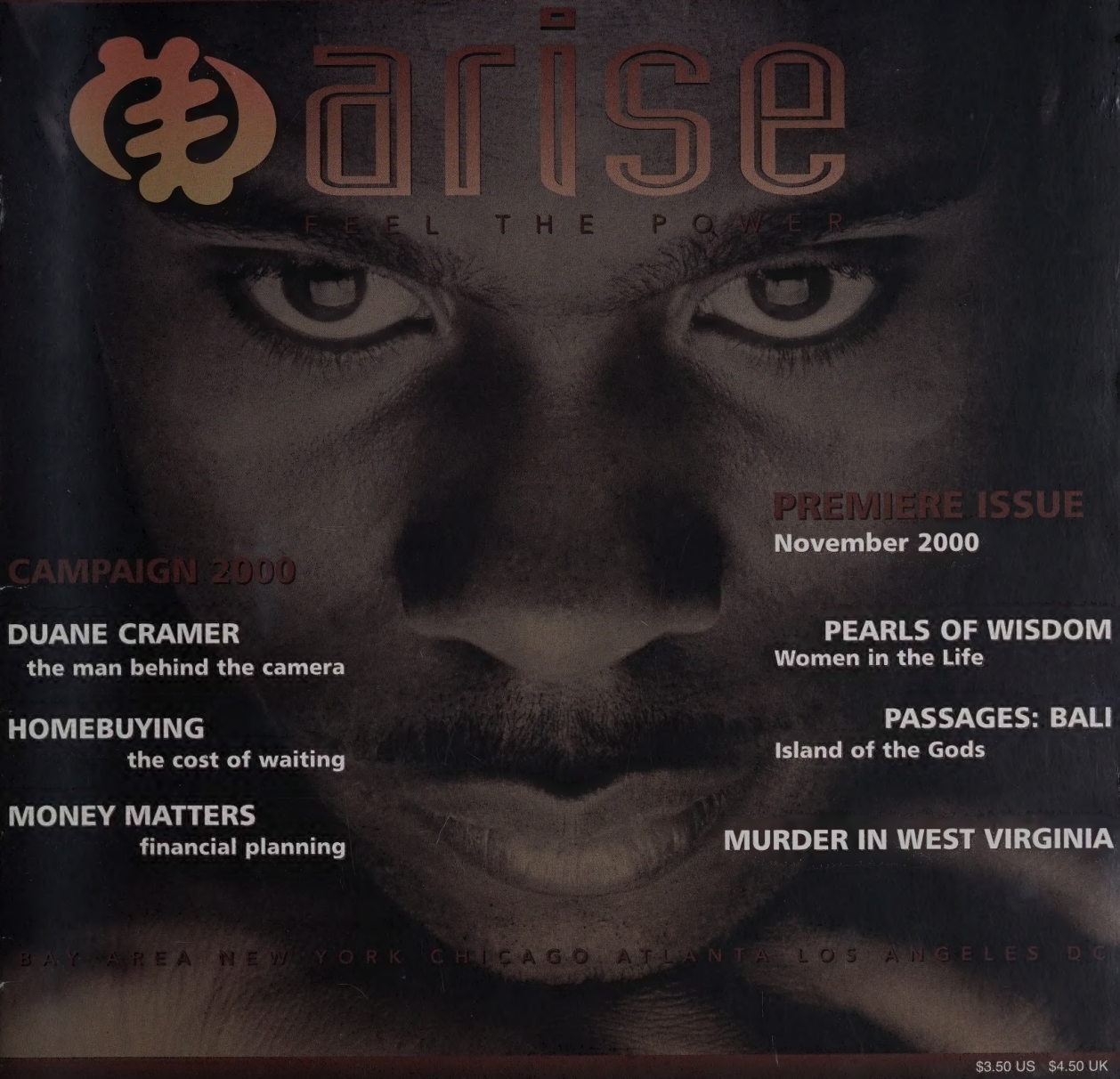
arise
FEEL THE POWER
PREMIERE ISSUE
November 2000
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DUANE CRAMER
the man behind the camera
HOMEBUYING
the cost of waiting
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financial planning
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Oakland, California

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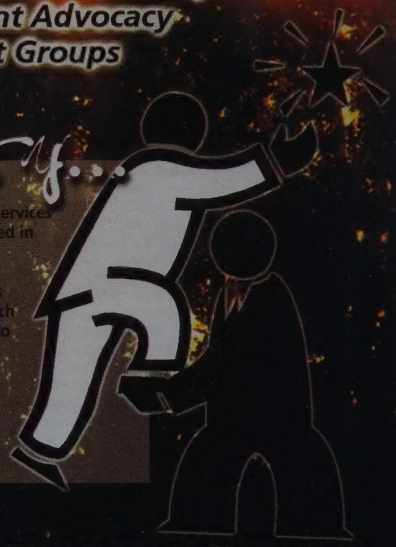
- HIV Education & Prevention
- Free Anonymous HIV Testing
- Client Advocacy
- Youth Transitional Housing
- Mental Health Assistance
- HIV Transitional Housing
- Treatment Advocacy
- Support Groups

Our Story...

The African American Men's AIDS Support Services & Survival Institute (AMASSI) was established in 1989 for men whose community had been ravaged by HIV and AIDS. Since that time AMASSI has been to the forefront of efforts in the San Francisco Bay Area funneling much needed treatment and prevention services to a relatively disenfranchised community that had been overlooked for far to long.

Today Over 75% of the work of AMASSI is in the housing arena, providing services to homeless women, children and famalies in Alameda County. • www.amassi.org



Thriving In The New Millennium

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Photo: Duane Cramer

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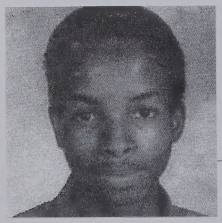
feel the power

arise

FEEL THE POWER

Gye Nyame is an Akan symbol, representing the omnipotence and the omnipresence of God, originating from Ghana, West Africa. ARISE Magazine embraces Gye Nyame to affirm the inherent spiritual nature of all African American Sexually Diverse people. While we acknowledge and honor the bountiful expressions of our individual spiritual beliefs, Gye Nyame is offered as an articulation of our totality and collective strength to effect positive change.

Photo: Duane Cramer



Arthur Warren Jr.
July 26, 1973 - July 4, 2000

Premiere Issue
November 2000
Volume 1, No. 1

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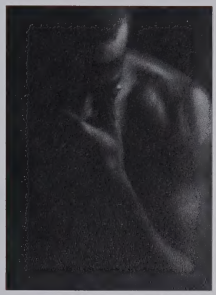

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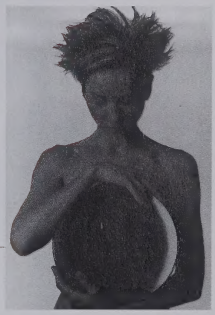

Kenneth Wingard

Publisher's Note

Photo: Hopeton Stewart

"And so the seed becomes a flower", begins the poet Langston Hughes in one of his elegant creations. What phrase could be more prophetic to describe the emergence of African American sexually diverse people all over the country? Redefining the parameters of sexual identity, many have artfully developed full lives as a couple or single, parent children, established entrepreneurial endeavors and a sleuth of other activities often thought limited to one aspect of the African American community. Indeed, we have heard the voice from within to ARISE and reinvent what it truly means to be free, proud and connected to ones heritage

ARISE Magazine is born out of the stuff that challenges us to reexamine what we thought we knew, raise the stakes a little higher and pursue a dream that almost seems beyond our reach. We recognize that to arise, one must be willing to move on up a little higher. ARISE is here to articulate the message of success, hope and courage embodied in the spirit of African American people who are achieving, in spite of the odds.

In our premiere issue, Akilah Monifa J.D., provides a perspective on Campaign 2000. Rev. Greg Smith traveled to Granttown, West Virginia to interview a family whose son was viciously murdered because of rumored sexual behavior, in Murder in West Virginia. In our article on Home Ownership, ARISE introduces you to families that are buying homes in an economy many have described as prohibitive. Pamela Ayo Yetunde, noted author, demystifies Employee Stock Option Plans, in Money Matters.

The inspiring Photography of Duane Cramer is featured in "The Man Behind the Lens". In Design by BOA, we interview Kennith Wingard, a designer and entrepreneur in the Power Principle. Passages, our travel section, explores the idyllic island of Bali, while Pearls of Wisdom, our section devoted to Women in the life share life lessons from our sisters. Happenings by Cedric Brown will offer ideas of interest for entertainment & play. ARISE to Health will feature Dr. Jaimila Neyon and discuss the benefits of chiropractic health and the value of balance in our fast-paced lives. All this and more is presented in the Premiere issue to capture the zeitgeist, essence, spirit of this important moment in our history.

ARISE will echo the call of voices long gone, to remind us to go inside ourselves and find those seeds planted even centuries ago by loved ones and strangers. ARISE is an invitation to revisit the dream, recall the vision and create anew our lives and the world around us.

Within all of us lie greatness, power and a creative force more abundant than we can fathom.

ARISE is an invitation to step outside of labels. We are men. We are women. We are gay, straight, lesbian, same gender loving, transgender, questioning and so forth. We are of African descent. We are of mixed heritage. We are Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, atheist or decidedly "spiritual". We are of every complexion, brown, black, caramel, bronze and honey. We are all of those things and we are none of those things, singularly. We are so much more than any label could ever convey. Above all else, we are a people called to ARISE. To move from where we are, to where we are destined to be. The journey begins. And so it is.

MacArthur H. Flournoy

Publisher

Photos: Duane Cramer

Libation to the Elders

And so the seed
Becomes a flower
And it its hour
Reproduces dreams
And flowers

And so the root
Becomes a trunk
And then a tree
And seeds of trees
And spring time sap
And summer shade
And autumn leaves
And shape of poems
And dreams
And more than tree

And so it is
With those who make
Of life a flower,
A tree, a dream
Reproducing (on into
its own and mine
And your infirmity)
Its beauty and its life
In you and me.

And so it was
And so it is with you:
The seed, the flower
The root, the tree
The dream, the you

This poem I make

(From poems you made)

For you.

For Russell and Rowena Jeliffe

Langston Hughes

Welcome to Arise!

Welcome to the world of ARISE, a publication dedicated to the African American sexually diverse community. Our mission is to affirm and acknowledge the creative and divine power that abides in all of us. We will honor our mission through feature stories that amplify our successes. Our aim is to offer a fresh perspective that rejuvenates the soul, affirms our beliefs, and sustains us through challenging times.

ARISE Magazine readers are achievers. We are committed to a distinct quality of life as well as a comfortable standard of living. We want the world to know that we have come through many challenges and continue to succeed in living, loving and laughing – because of a faith that defies fear and a desire to dream beyond limits.

We are a people of many faces, thoughts and ideas. We are a community that is dedicated to health and wellness, who enjoys traveling and want to explore exciting destinations off the traditional commercial highway.

We enjoy the world of arts and entertainment as well as actively engaging ourselves in today's booming technology industry. We are savvy in navigating the information highway to gather information for the purposes of starting businesses, creating a financial portfolio or just searching for a new hot restaurant for friends who just arrived in town.

ARISE will introduce our readers to businesses and services that appreciate our quality of life and respect our community.

We need to hear from you. Please know that this is a publication committed to being responsive to our readership. The fact is we want to establish a partnership with you, the reader. Contact us. Your ideas, suggestions and comments are always welcomed at ARISE Magazine. Therefore, I personally invite you to share your thoughts.

Glenn Alexander
Director of Marketing

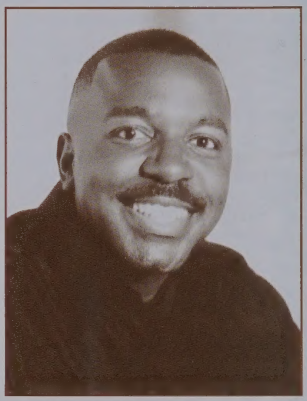

Photo: Robert Bengston

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www.planetout.com | AOL Keyword: PlanetOut
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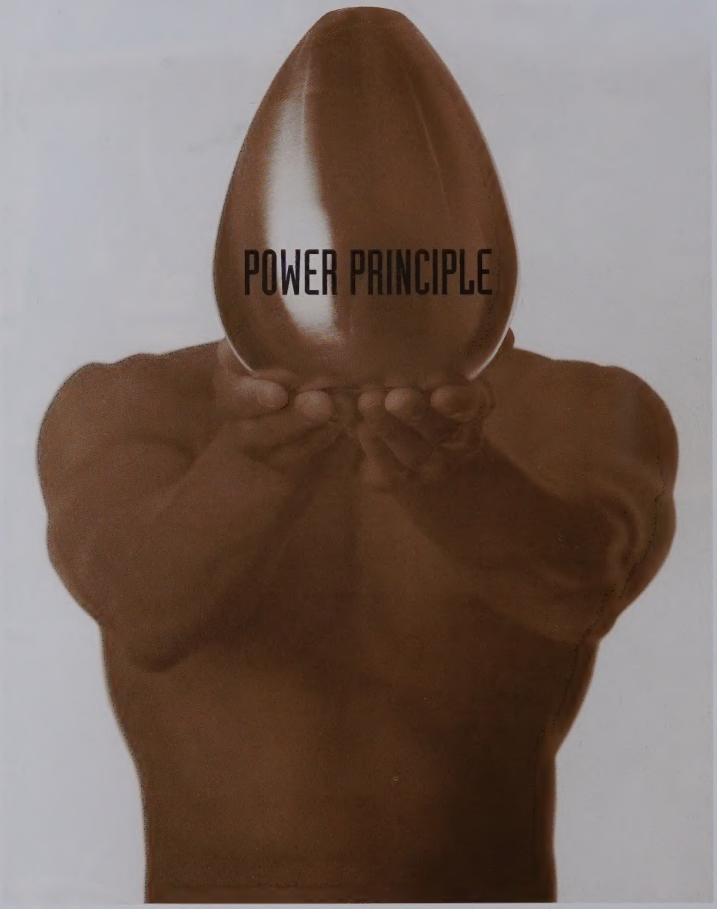
Design by BOA

An Interview with Kenneth Wingard
Designer / Entrepreneur



"I've always felt that being black and gay is a huge advantage."

When Kenneth Wingard decided to launch his own accessories line in 1997 he was armed with 8 years of experience in product development at Pottery Barn, a degree in architecture, and a keen knack for knowing what products were needed in the marketplace. He designs and manufactures everything from picture frames and candleholders to small tables and throws made out of materials such as brushed metal, felt, and leather. I caught up with this busy entrepreneur one afternoon and we discussed his views on power in the workplace.

Q. We both know that there are very few blacks in the design field. Do you feel that that has hindered or helped you in your profession ?

A. "It definitely helps because anything you can do to leave a lasting impression is helpful in distinguishing you from your competitors. I've always felt that being both black and gay is a huge advantage, but what it really boils down to is the work. If you've got a good product at a good price that sells well that's all that will really matter. "

Q. Do you feel that you're perceived as powerful in this business and how much of that do you think is attributable to color?

A. "First of all, being based in San Francisco I don't feel like there's a lot of color prejudice in the work environment. I think that power in the workplace comes from how well you do your job. Now when I worked with a large corporation I realized that potential business associates saw me as a talking head for that corporation so they immediately respected me based on the reputation of the company I represented. When I started Wingard I was a little nervous about how well my line would be received because I was stepping out on my own for the first time with only my name and my work behind me."

Q. You know when you buy a photo frame and they have pictures of mostly white people in them? Who are all those black people in your photo frames?

A. (laughs) "Those are actually real photos of family members. I've gotten quite a lot of positive feedback from my retailers who say that diversity definitely helps sell the product."

Look for his products at such upscale stores as Metro@home in Oakland and Fillamento and Loft in San Francisco.

Recommended Reads

The function of art is to do more than tell it like it is – it's to imagine what is possible.

Bell Hooks, American Writer and Educator

The Way Forward Is with a Broken Heart

Author: Alice Walker
Editor: Kate Medina
Format: Hardcover, 224 pages
ISBN: 0679455876
Publisher: Random House, Incorporated
Published Date: October 2000

Not a Day Goes By

Author: E. Lynn Harris
Format: Hardcover, 288 pages
ISBN: 0385498241
Publisher: Doubleday & Company, Incorporated
Published Date: July 2000

Whose Song?: And Other Stories

Author: Thomas Glave
Format: Paperback, 204 pages
ISBN: 0872863751
Publisher: City Light Books
Published Dated: October 2000

The Season of Beento Blackbird

Author: Akosua Busia
Format: Paperback, 367 pages
ISBN: 0671014099
Publisher: Pocket Books
Published Date: October 1997

Respecting the Soul

Author: Keith Boykin
Format: Paperback
ISBN: 0380800217
Publisher: Morrow, William and Company
Published Date: March 1999

Dawnsong!: The Epic Memory of Askia Touré

Author: Askia M. Touré
Format: Paperback, 78 pages
ISBN: 088378209X
Publisher: Third World Press
Published Date: January 2000

Dead Above Ground

Author: Jervey Tervalon
Format: Hardcover, 240 pages
ISBN: 0671034685
Publisher: Pocket Books
Published Date: December 1999

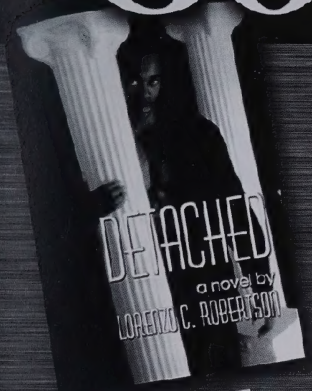
Breath Again

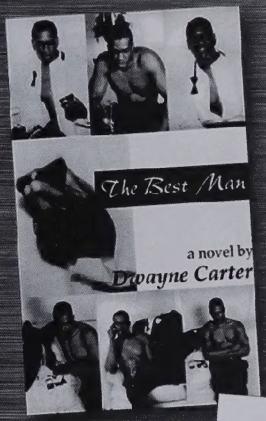
Author: Ricc Rollins
Format: Paperback
ISBN: 1892096315
Publisher: Ishai Books

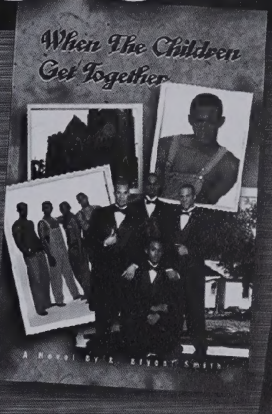
Men's Room

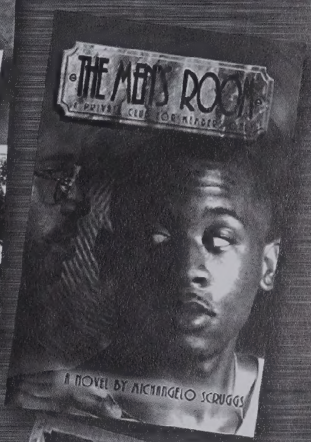
Author: Michangelo Scruggs
Format: Paperback
ISBN: 1892096325
Publisher: Ishai Books

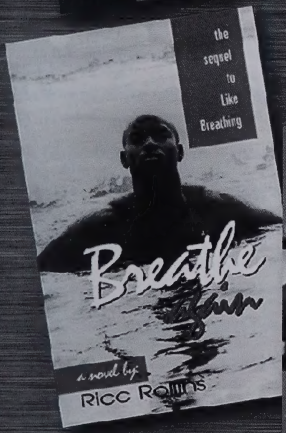
Got books?

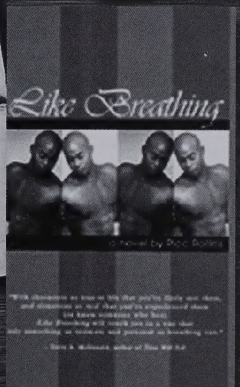


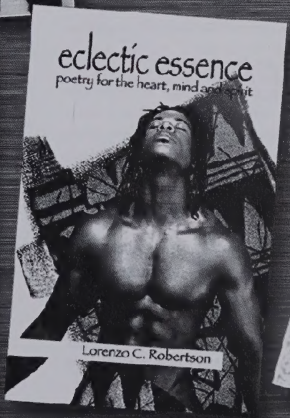


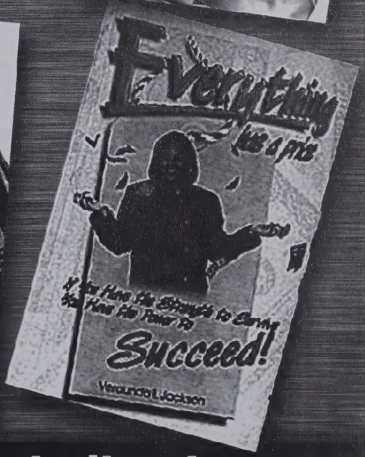












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"Bourgie" Brothers Demystifying Class Angst

By Tim'm T. West

"I'm a bohemian student working for a non-profit and I thrift shop and I'm politically left of Al Gore and gay rapper who uses sufficient Ebonics references daily. Me? Bourge? Yup!"

Whasup Peoples? I just recently came out of the closet about something that for many of us generates a great deal of anxiety: I'm a bourge Negro. Bourge (boo-gee). Say it three times. It takes some of the bite out of it. No doubt, being called bourge by someone is hardly a compliment. Don't pretend that you don't know what is meant by this term.

Let's indulge the colloquial term "bourge". A term ebonically adapted from the post-Marxist class term "bourgeoisie", it refers loosely to an order of upwardly mobile black folk. I know that many of you are squirming in your seats at such a simplistic definition. More of you are aghast at the accusation that because you are culturally and intellectually engaged, upward mobile black folks (you are reading ARISE) that you are bourge. I went through that phase. When class issues became class subscriptions, I got over it.

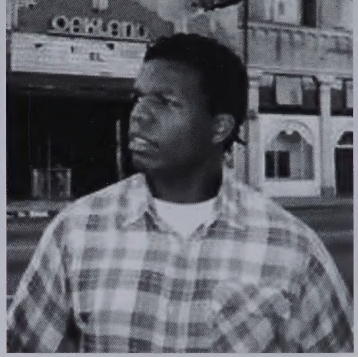
I recall conversations with bourge folk at gay boy dinner parties in Fort Green (Brooklyn), Cascade Heights (Atlanta), Hyde Park (Chicago), Capitol Hill (D.C.), Leimert Park (L.A.), or the Oakland Hills.

After a brief name introduction:

Bourge Negro #1 asks: "So where did you attend college?" Implicit in such a question is a bourge assumption. But he's right the room reeks of bourge-osity.

Bourge respondent #2 (OK…that's me) responds: "Oh…I went to school in North Carolina, in Durham" Ummm hmmm. As if I went to Durham Culinary Academy or something.. I had too much bourge guilt. I wanted to keep it real. I was a cultural warrior, a Diasporic African, and down for my peoples. I rallied for Mumia's re-trial and owned all of Mary J. Blige's CD's. There were also the authenticating hoods I grew up in from Highland Court in Little Rock, AR to Rochdale Village in Queens, NY. I could not tell bourge Negro #1 the name of my undergraduate institution. I could say where it was. Durham is, after all, is a black city. If I were correct about the bourge-osity of the setting, he would know where I went to college.

He nodded as evidence.



And I, as we do in the settings, reciprocate: "And you?" to which he responds: "I went to school in Upstate New York. In Ithaca."

Yeah right! As if he went to Ithaca State Prison Hairweaving Academy!

Neither of us mentioned Duke or Cornell.

We don't have to. It's understood. Now perhaps I'm referring to a particular type of bourge Negro and not you. Don't get mad. I'll own my stuff.

After all, the term bourge has come to represent so many things that it really indicates so little about anybody these days: Is it the Jack and Jill alumnus who inherited being bourge (can't help it and doesn't know any better)?

Is it lower or working class anxiety about being short of middle class status (e.g., he wears [fake] gold and Tommy Hillfiger-esque-like clothing, drives a Lexus, but lives in Section 8 housing)?

Is it "I'm middle class and want everybody to know it complex (e.g., the friend who will borrow coins for the club because of a "situation" called one pay check for being broke)?

Is it the "was raised poor and so traumatized by poverty that she or he obsesses about economic wealth complex" (you know the B.N. at the party half drunk but talking about his stock gains or the next vacation when a soul could care less)?

Or it could be the working class artist-scholar more literate than most CEO's but bitter so will throw out words like "postmodern" or "womanist" during a conversation about ham hocks.

We…yes, I am claiming this category…can claim some sense of empathy or connection with the proletariat or poor because we're steadily pimping our art and brains to keep food and shelter over the dread locked head.

Our power is in the mighty word, not the mighty dollar. With each other, we might be caught saying: "this abject capitalist democracy dehumanizes the earth's defenseless" when we really mean "the system is f&%$#@#$"

Hey, you can find some humor in this right. I used to get terribly upset when someone assumed that I was bourge. What was I giving off? It was like thinking I'm butch or banjie and some straight girl clocking me as gay.

I have worn my hair in locks or nappy fros since the late eighties.

I'm a bohemian student working for a non-profit and I thrift shop.

I'm politically left of Al Gore and a gay rapper who uses sufficient Ebonics references daily. Me? Bourge? Yup!

In fact, I rhyme with a collaborative of brothas in Oakland called D/DC. That D/DC is interchangeably a hip-hop acronym for Deep Dickollective, Diasporically Disconnected Californians, Dangerous DJ Conduits, etc…says volumes about who we are…dreads, Slam Poetry, and dashikis included.

Our debut album will be entitled "bourgebohopostpomoafrohomo" because we understand the irony and complexities of the bourge Negro collective.

We purchase airline tickets on the web and spend significant time in coffee shops and bookstores (yes…even the Afrocentric ones that ease our angst). One day I just had to admit to myself: "I am bourge".

Say it three times.

It takes some of the sting out of the term. I had to admit that being bourge, on whatever level, doesn't make me the son of Lucifer.

The failure of black bourge folk to respond economically and politically to our more disadvantage brothas and sistahs is a fact th at makes me uneasy. It's sad to see the class gap widening more among blacks than among whites, but I'm secure that my effort and commitments are made with all my people in mind (Sheniqua, Tay Tay, and all-uh-dem).

Perhaps the only thing that would be shameful about being bourgie is if you were one of those "pull yourself up by your own bootstrap I'm against affirmative action (but glad I had it) I don't go to clubs or lowly parts of town credential boasting black gay Republicans." Then again, maybe that's not such an oxymoron.

Prove me wrong.

One thing is certain. I was quick to call uppity Negroes "bourge" until I was given a bit of advice from one of my bohemian brethren: "A crackhead ain't gonna call you bourge. They'll call you a crackhead though, cause they know what that is.

In essence, it takes a bourge Negro to know one.

"Perhaps the only thing that would be shameful about being bourgie is if you were one of those "pull yourself up by your own bootstrap I'm against affirmative action (but glad I had it) I don't go to clubs or lowly parts of town credential boasting black gay Republicans."

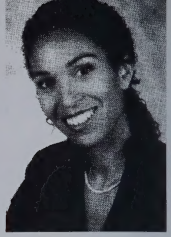
Tim'm T. West is a youth activist, scholar and poet who currently coordinates Educational/Career Counseling and support for positive youth at SMAAC Youth Center in Oakland. He is in Stanford's program in Modern Thought and Literature and is querying black masculinity in hip-hop. Two projects, one of which was mentioned in this article (D.DC), the other of which is a collection of essays, poetry and prose tentatively entitled "Red Direct Revival: will both be available in 2001. Tim'm was raised primarily in Taylor, Arkansas.

Tim'm T. West

Nappyheadedblakkboy@yahoo.com

TOTAL HEALTH via CHIROPRACTIC BALANCE

by Dr. Jaimila Neyon



Think about it, what determines your quality of life?

Here in the Bay Area, we are moving at a faster pace every year. Then lets add to that the holiday season. The festivities and reunions can be great fun but most of us already have a full plate, so we usually just figure that if we make it to the New Year still standing that, we won. But at what cost? Have we given attention to the true quality of our lives?

A moment of reflection…

As I figure it, I can have all the stuff in the world and all the love in the world but if my body is unhealthy then I can't be present to enjoy any of it. People in failing health and/or pain are often distracted, moody, tired and have a hard time really enjoying life to its maximum potential. This is hard on them and everyone around them. Being healthy is the first determinant in optimizing our quality of life.

What is it to feel healthy?

When you feel healthy, you feel whole. Your body is able to respond to stress by speeding up and then it is able to fully relax. There's no divisive pain in the back, stomach, arms, legs or anywhere else. No infirmities or vague fleeting pains or numbness. Instead you experience an all over good feeling, a feeling of wholeness that comes when the systems of the body work in sweet harmony, like a well-tuned, well-directed orchestra.

What is responsible for directing our bodies functioning?

Meet the director of your body's complex orchestra of functioning. The nervous system. When we have the expansive feeling of health and well-being it is largely due to the credit of our properly functioning nervous systems, often called the aster system, which directs, all the systems and function s of our bodies.

Ideally, nerve impulses flow smoothly, providing a feeling of health and wholeness. When one or more of the vertebras become misaligned (spinal subluxation) the nerves many be pinched. This alters the normal flow of nerve impulses, and the pinch nerve may bring on pain and disease conditions. This can manifest symptoms in the back, or any of the body parts served by the affected nerves.

Anything, which interferes with the proper functioning of the nervous systems, the master system can disrupt the body health momentum, and therefore, your quality of life.

Where can I go to get the health of my nervous system checked, diagnosed and treated?

A doctor of chiropractic goes to school the same amount of hours as a medical doctor with a different emphasis in the course study. We focus all of our training on the examination, diagnosis and natural treatment of conditions affecting the nervous systems and the musculoskeletal system. Therefore, when health problems occur chiropractors are uniquely qualified to provide a natural, noninvasive treatment to many conditions affecting our health and well-being. Chiropractic is also an excellent adjunct to medical treatments, as it will put the master system "back in the drivers seat" to help speed recovery and re-establish health.

I am healthy and I just want to stay that way. What can Chiropractic offer me?

Most problems don't just suddenly appear they have a long period of dysfunction in which the bodies own healing mechanisms are fighting back, but they just don't seem to "have enough gas" to get the job done. At this time, most people will feel little to no symptoms. In addition, this is when the problem is the hardest to feel and the easiest to heel. Chiropractic treatment at this time will give you the quickest healing. If you want to stay well then get chiropractic check-up and keep any small problems from becoming major.

To follow at the end of the article

Jaimila has studied massage, nutrition, herbology, yoga and meditation. In addition to her rigorous chiropractic training, she has participated in hundreds of seminar hours. She has also been published and won an award for an article on "Spinal Misalignment and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)." Jaimila was bestowed the honor of Magna Cum Laude upon graduating from chiropractic school. More importantly, Jaimila has a deep connection to the life force and a love of passing her knowledge and compassion on to others so they can lead healthier, happier and freer lives.

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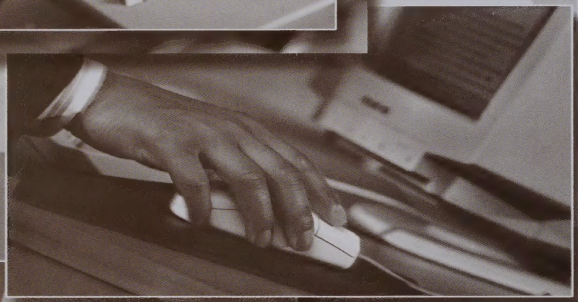

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Our progress has never depended on the president or the congress . . .
it has always depended on the action of black people and the Power of God

Andrew Young (b. 1932)

ARISE TO POWER

As written by MacArthur H. Flournoy

We have Power. All of us have it. Too few of us know what to do with it. Most are in search of it. Many have forgotten that they ever had it. Still, others roam the earth looking for what they already possess. Power.

Isn't it amazing how you can go through life minding your own business and suddenly things take a shift? Those things that once seemed secure fall away like a whisper. It's absolutely infuriating when you have made your life's plan, aligned your strategies, plotted your course and then what you once called your "life" explodes in front of your very eyes. I don't know about you, but I find it terribly difficult to be "spiritual" during those moments. Often in those times we find ourselves "feeling" powerless. But are we really?

In those moments, I have come to discover an incredible paradox about life. When I am most vulnerable, least guarded and by my definition "down and out", I tap into a kind of power that I have not come to know under any other circumstances. I do not like feeling exposed. In fact, I hate it. Things I consider weaknesses and frailties tell me that I am defenseless. Yet, it is through those very same situations that I come across a power that flows through my veins bringing life to places, that have long since been dead.

I have discovered that rigor mortis, as a form of spiritual death can set into a life, attaching itself more insidiously than any cancer known to man. For all practical purposes you are alive, walking around, working out, in relationships, going to work, participating in spiritual traditions & customs, attending social functions, doing the wild thang and yes. Quite DEAD. I am speaking of a death that suffocates dreams, leaving only the echo of hollow hopes and a list of regrets as a sign that at one time - you were alive. You can ARISE.

In those times that we cannot see where our lives are headed, when we haven't the faintest clue what we are supposed to be doing, trust this one truth: You will ARISE stronger than before - to discover a new source of power yet known to you. Be it a dead end job, a tired relationship, a forgotten dream or a secret aspiration, you need to know that the desire to do more, be more and have more is a seed that has been planted in your spirit. The Creator personally tilled the garden of your heart and planted that very seed that gnaws at you, the seed that will not allow you to rest and live in the land of discontentment and mediocrity. It is the perfect will of The Divine that "the seed becomes a flower", in the words of Langston Hughes.

The fruition of your dream (whatever it may be) will take root and blossom in its season. ARISE from this space, and prepare to move to the next place. Appreciate where you are now, just as you are, recognizing that you are presently being equipped to go forward. ARISE from fear and step into the Power of unshakable belief. I have discovered that the Creator will use anything, be it a virus or an addiction, a friend or a foe, a dream or a desire, a failure or a success to show us a deeper level of power that resides in all of us.

Photo: Duane Cramer

We are not limited to what this world has to offer. Neither are we limited to what we see with our natural eye. We have the ability to connect with the Divine and summon every iota of power that we need to fulfill our life's mission, what ever that may be. Ella Fitzgerald reminds us "Just don't give up trying to do what you really want to do. Where there's love and inspiration, I don't think you can go wrong"

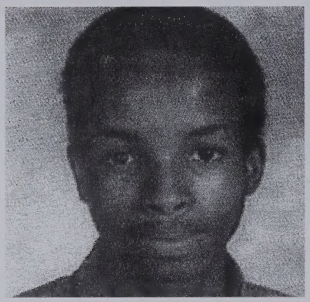
All too often, we have accepted a definition of our self worth that is not accurate. We have endured racism, homophobia, sexism, and virtually every other form of discrimination. And while we are not victims, often our deepest wounds have been inflicted by those closest to us from within our own families and the black community-at-large. Still I hear the voice of our Elder Sister, Dr. Maya Angelou exclaiming in her inimitable style "And Still I Rise". Such determination for living a full and liberated life cannot be relegated to the rung of low self-esteem. On the contrary, our esteem is monumental. Maybe its time we begin to appreciate ourselves for being ourselves. Ralph Ellison reminds us "When I discover who I am, I'll be free".

Our spiritual power is inherent and without limit. Within the realm of the spirit, we understand that we are connected to the beginning and the end, the start and the finish. Repeatedly, our elders have reminded us that we are not without power. We have all the power we need at our disposal. There is no dream too big for us. There is no vision beyond our grasp.

ARISE to this hour. Reach deep within yourself and discover a reservoir of love and courage that exceeds fear and doubt. ARISE to Power. For indeed this day, this moment, this very hour you are Powerful. ARISE to Power. ARISE.

Murder in West Virginia

Written by Rev. Greg Smith
Pastor of New Light with God Community Church.



One day she [Mrs. Warren] was in the local market and saw Bill Parker, David's father. When their eyes met in the store, she gave him a gentle hello because they were neighbors.

Mr. Parker came over to her and they began to hug each other and cry together. She kept uttering to him "I don't hate you or your family...

I don't hate you or your family".

Mother of Arthur Warren Jr. to the Father of David Parker, the young male that murdered her son.

I arrived in the small town, in West Virginia about noon on a cloudy day. The streets were busy and the roads narrow. In downtown Fairmont, there are no hotels, only motels on the outskirts of town. The closest airport is 40 miles away in Morgantown. In the local courthouse, there are no people of color employed anywhere (not even as janitors). There are no people of color employed on local law enforcement. Standing outside the courthouse, one cannot help but think of Birmingham in the 60's.

"Junior would always let me know where he was going and when he would be home. He just did not leave without letting other folks know when he was going to be home. So when he didn't come home, early on ...I knew, I knew something was wrong" said Mrs. Warren, mother of Arthur Warren Jr., "Junior" as he was known by his friends and family. Whether it is the instincts of a mother or the spiritual bond this particular woman had with her son, her suspicions confirmed what she could never have fathomed. Two white male teenagers in the city of Fairmont killed her son Arthur Warren Jr. on the morning of July 4. The teenagers have been arrested by the Fairmont Police.

According to depositions and signed statements collected from the defendants, obtained by the Marion County Sheriffs, on the night of July 3rd, 17-year-old David Allen Parker invited Arthur Jr. over to a vacant house owned by David's father. When Junior arrived about 11:45pm, an argument occurred between him and David. This happened in front of the two other teenagers, 17 year old Jared Wilson and 16-year-old Jason Shoemaker. David began to beat Junior, knocking him to the floor and kicking him in the body and the face with steel toe boots. Jared went in another room, put on his steel toe boots and began kicking Junior along with David. Jason stated that although he did kick Jr. a couple of times, he did not participate. According to Jared, there was so much blood he began to vomit. Junior got up off the floor at one point and hit David once. David kicked Junior in the face and they thought they killed him.

At this point, David and Jared took Junior's 120lb body and put him in the back of David's Camaro. While driving, Junior regained his conscious and began crying out "please take me home, please take me home" all the while reaching over the seat from the back of the Camaro for mercy. The boy's response was to shove him back into the rear of the car.

Driving the distance of about one mile, the boys took Junior outside of town. David asked Jared to help him get Junior out of the car, but Jared stated that he was to heavy, so David just pulled Junior's battered body through the back seat of the Camaro from the hatchback.

Hurling Junior's body to the ground, David got back in his car and repeatedly drove over Junior's body as he cried out. They broke all his ribs and his spleen. Reports issued by the Marion County Forensic lab would later reveal that Junior's liver was severed in half. The intent was to make it look like a hit and run.

David threatened Jared and Jason's life, that if they told, he would kill them also because he had killed two times previously. When Jason got home, he was so scared that he called his mother at work the next day. She called the police. Jason is the key witness to the murder. David told Jason the night before the murder, that he was going to kill Junior.

Upon learning of this murder, I was enraged. I also sensed that something else was going on in Marion County that warranted further investigation. I had to find out more about the facts. You see, Arthur was a Black Gay Man and his family knew that - and they loved him.

I had the privilege of meeting with the family. Should America ever meet this family, you cannot help but love them. They are your traditional Christian family with an unrelenting love for God. Arthur Sr. is a fair and just man. He wants justice for his boy. It was also Arthur Sr. who insisted that the casket remain open that the world might see what hate had done to his son.

"Mother Warren" as Mrs. Warren is affectionately known, is one of the nicest women you could ever hope to meet. To get to know this family is truly an honor. As for her son's sexuality, Mrs. Warren stated "My bible does not say anything about God having a problem with Gay people".

One afternoon while we were having lunch, she told me plainly and in her straightforward way, "I do not hate the families or those boys". In fact, she had an opportunity to share her message directly with the Parker family. One day while she was in the local market, she saw Bill Parker, David's father. When their eyes met in the store, she gave him a gentle hello because they were neighbors. Mr. Parker came over to her and they began to hug each other and cry together. She kept uttering to him "I don't hate you or your family…I don't hate you or your family".

Later that evening, while visiting with the family, I asked what they wanted to happen to these young men. To be clear, I shared with the family that some folks are going to want the death penalty. Without hesitation, they were adamantly opposed to a death sentence for these young men - but do support life in prison.

My focus has shifted in part, from this inexplicable tragedy to the legal maneuvers that have since followed. The two young men in question, have pled innocent despite their documented admissions of guilt. The case is being moved out of the county to a neighboring county so the young men could get a fair trial. Can justice be served in an all white county? This is a county which Reader's Digest, has reported numerous incidences of corruption and hatred for people of color. The defendant's attorneys presented the motion to move the case to another county, while the Prosecuting Attorney Richard Bunner did nothing to fight it. Motion Approved.

Sometime around 11:00 PM, Arthur Warren (Junior) came over to the house; David blew up over the story going around that David was having a sexual relationship with Junior. David started punching Junior until he knocked him to the ground, then Junior tried to get up. David knocked him to the ground then started repeatedly kicking him in the side and the face, with his boots with metal toes. David wanted me to help beat Junior. I kicked him a couple of times. Then I backed off. David pushed him outside. Junior looked up and David kicked him in the face.

David thought he died then; he got his car out of the garage and threw him in the trunk. He then drove to pull off the bridge by the power plant. David then took Junior. out of the trunk of the car and threw him on the ground. David drove over top of him then backed over top of him again. He then drove us back to the house"

Jared Wilson - Signed statement obtained by the Marion County Sheriff Department.

I met with Mr. Brunner the next morning. He stated he did not feel he could win and that the county did not want all the " bad publicity". I spoke with him about the history of the other counties and he stated that he was not aware of that. This is when he stood up to motion that my interview was over. This is the same attorney that made no effort to contact the Warren family and apprise them of any of the court dates because in his words [they] "did not need to know this information, because these were just hearings".

Efforts are now underway to suppress the statements obtained by the local sheriff's department. It is very clear that the intent is to get these young men acquitted. There is an atrocity-taking place that represents an affront to civil liberties and the work of every civil rights leader that sacrificed their lives that we might know freedom. As a national community, we need to love, support and assist this family.

Arthur Warren, Jr. was a young man known more for his sense of humor, friendly nature and easygoing stride in life. He seemed to know everyone and though slight of build, from all indications he was a giant in character. The question comes to mind, how will his life be memorialized? What good can come of this horrific incident? What will it take to mobilize an effort within the African American community to expose the life threatening vestiges of homophobia that continue to kill our brothers, sisters, sons and daughters, much in the same manner of lynching? One even wonders if Arthur Sr. perhaps gave us the greatest gift of all – the willingness to reveal the vile nature of homophobia, fear and hatred for the world to see. We can learn from this. How many more will have to die before we arise to respond with decisive action and strategic thought? Indeed it is our very our lives and the well-being of our nation that are at stake.

If you would like to assist in anyway please contact Rev. Greg Smith (323) 731-4980 and/or arthurwarrenjr@aol.com. We need to assist this family and coordinate our national efforts to monitor hate crimes more closely in and against persons of color. All information must be brought to the community as an awareness tool for fairness rules. In addition, I must thank Rev. Troy Perry, Rev. Nancy Wilson and Elder Jewell Williams for their spiritual and financial support as we try to assist this family. Shalom

BALI: Island of the Gods

by Glenn Alexander

Bali – an island filled with beauty and mystery is known as "Morning to the World". On my first visit to Bali, I remember the perfect sunsets. The sun slowing fading over the Indian Ocean while the gentle waves washed against the white sandy beaches – that will always be Bali to me. She is an island like no other, a place where the sweet fragrances of exotic flowers relax you and bring you resplendent tranquility.

Bali also offers the visitor a mélange of choices. From touring ancient temples such as Besakih or royal compounds of regal families from a distant era to sampling the local cuisine served on the beach with fresh seafood extracted just footsteps away from your table. Whether it is dining at PJ's at the Four Seasons or at the local seafood bar located directly on the beach the dining experience will be one of remembrance.

Shopping for fine leather crafts, handcrafted textiles, sculptures and other exotic fineries will be an adrenaline surge for the bargain enthusiast, as each item is negotiated upon in the open markets. Be it Kuta Beach or Nusa Dua to the art boutiques in Ubud – Bali remains a shopping paradise. Remember you will get the better deals in the morning and always negotiate. The cost you see on any item is usually inflated by 50% - so bargain and bargain hard.

For people like myself – and countless other romantics, Bali is a special place. It is the central foothills with its green rice fields. It is the inside of a temple at dawn, or a red-beaked Javan Kingfisher holding court over a river valley. It is a private house, brilliantly designed by a foreign architect and incorporating all the character of the island. It is a magical place, full of beauty and grace, a natural paradise populated by a welcoming people for whom time seems happily to have stood still.

My recommendation for accommodations in Bali is undoubtedly the Ritz Carlton – Bali. To enjoy Bali at its finest is to experience the 5-star service of the Ritz Carlton. Built on 173 acres, the 323-room resort hotel is perched on a bluff overlooking the Indian Ocean. It is four stories, following the basic Balinese architectural principles that no building should be higher than coconut palms. The hotel includes 36 one and two-bedroom villas. The majority of the guest rooms have ocean views. Located in Jimbaran in Southwest Bali, eight degrees south of the equator, the hotel is a 15-minutes drive from Ngurah Rai International Airport.

Whether it is business or pleasure that brings you to the Ritz-Carlton Bali, you will find that the facilities and service at the Ritz-Carlton Bali are printed to deliver on every possible demand. From hosting a business convention for one hundred to a perfect holiday for two. The staff and service will surpass even the most discriminative traveler.

Bali has long enchanted its visitors. Today, as this enduring society comes to terms with a changing world, the traveler is presented with an overwhelming and sensual experience. I invite you to discover the magic that is Bali and discover why it is "Morning to the World".

Travel Hint: Regardless of the published rate always inquire about special packages that the hotel offers at various times of year. Try traveling with another couple or friend. By splitting the cost, you may be able to upgrade to a suite or villa and still save on the overall cost by sharing the rate. Finally, take advantage of a travel wholesaler. These individuals have already negotiated special rates with the property and the packages have room, tax and ground transfers from airport to hotel included.

HOME OWNERSHIP The Cost of Waiting

by MacArthur H. Flournoy

You have to do what you don't want to do now, so that you can do what you want to do later.

—P.J. Rhae, Realtor and President, MIRACLE MORTGAGE

African-American men and women are buying homes all over the country as single individuals and as domestic partners. The rising cost of housing is a critical issue confronting all Americans. Yet, the apparent obstacles do not deter many families, seeking to fulfill their dream of homeownership. "Initially we thought about just getting a larger apartment. Then we considered the cost of rent for a two or three bedroom apartment. It just seemed to make more financial sense to buy a home," offered Joe Robinson, formerly of Oakland, who recently purchased a five bedroom home in Stockton CA with his partner Cornelius Daniels.

California, touted as the most expensive state in which to buy a home, second only to New York, has experienced a severe shortage of housing which has caused the price of homes in some instances to triple in market value and price in the last five years. Most recently, the California Association of Realtors reported a six per cent decline in the number of households that can afford to buy a home, as compared to 1999. ARISE spoke with three different families that purchased homes within the last year. Their experiences, insights and lessons learned attest to the rewards of commitment and perseverance.

Bob Cox of Oakland CA purchased his three-bedroom home in August of last year. "I really didn't want to leave Oakland. I had to consider areas that others have shunned so that I could be a homeowner. In the beginning, I was a little leery, but I have been there a year and I-have not had a single problem", referencing the community of East Oakland.

Cox' rationale is one of the vital principles of homeownership espoused by Miracle Mortgage during their monthly homebuyer seminars. "You have to understand that when buying a home you have to think like a homeowner. It is all about value. Where are you going to get the most value for your dollars? The problem is that many people do not want to have to live outside of their immediate surroundings, but it is really a question of economics" contends P.J. Rhae, President and Founder of Miracle Mortgage; a company committed to homeownership for those who have considered themselves ineligible?

P.J. Rhae President, Miracle Mortgage

Communities formerly regarded as "the hood" or more commonly referred to as the "ghetto" are undergoing a physical transformation and public image renewal campaign that would rival that of any major political candidate. Live-work spaces or lofts, as they are called are aggressively sought after as premium opportunities for homeowners. They are regarded as havens for artist and the creative set.

Still many are not willing to live in urban centers more often known for their crime rate than property value. However, there is a consistent influx of people that are not indigent to the communities who are moving in with regularity. The outcome is potentially beautiful home that could be refurbished at a nominal cost with some sweat equity, are being overlooked as key investment opportunities. Once renovated, property value usually soars, thereby locking many prospective homebuyers out of the market. The California bay area is but one such example where a recent development just completed rehab of a warehouse with forty-one live-work spaces in West Oakland. While more than 90% African American families occupy West Oakland, the new lofts are occupied by less than 10% of African American families.

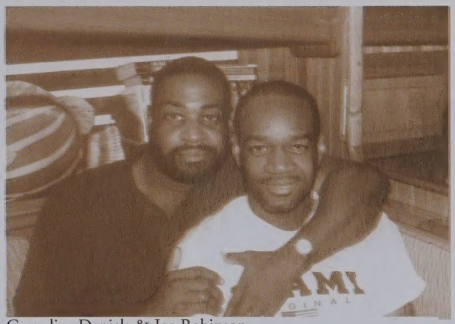
Akilah Monifa and her Partner Ruth Bolden made a strategic decision even before looking for a home. "We looked at our finances and determined how much house we could afford. We decided not to look at a single home that was beyond our budget". Cornelius Daniels, a Housing Specialist with Miracle Mortgage commends this level of forethought. "Most people do not really appreciate what they can actually afford. Its difficult to appreciate how much house you can buy in the current housing market until you actually start the process of looking at homes for

sale. The best thing a prospective homebuyer can do is giving themselves options. Distinguish between what you "want" and what you absolutely "need". Daniel furthered offered, "If perhaps you are someone that is willing to commute an hour to work consider buying a home in an outlying area that will afford you more house and greater value".

One of the essential principles of home ownership is saving. "Saving is an every hour thing…you must save every hour of every day to reach your goal. Changing your whole mind and your whole attitude is what this is all about," states Rhae. Some have called this a reordering of values. Changing priorities. Others have called it good old common sense and just thinking like an adult. Whatever the case, many men and women all over the country within the African American sexually diverse community are progressively seeking homes to buy and sell.

Great preparation can be your best friend (which is not to be confused with waiting to begin the process or worse yet procrastination). "Many people are simply waiting for the right time to correct that credit issue, resolve that legal matter, or save that certain amount of money, they believe they need to move forward" offered Daniels. Rhae warns that could be a fatal flaw in reasoning. "The problem with waiting is that unless your income grows as the same rate or greater than inflation and the rising cost of housing, you are putting yourself at a disadvantage".

Simply put, while paying rent provides one shelter, it does nothing else for your finances, much less providing a person with any form of financial security. The other side of the equation is that homeownership comes with great responsibility and an initial outlay of cash. However, in addition to the pride associated with homeownership, there is the opportunity for significant tax benefits, and building up equity, which equals an excellent investment opportunity. In the words of P.J. Rhae "buying a home, is making an investment in yourself and you family". the consumer bringing them business.


Cornelius Daniels & Joe Robinson

Clearly, the issue of buying a home is anything but simple. However, the fact of the matter is that African-Americans have a rich tradition of hurdling challenges and overcoming all kinds of barriers. The real issue may be one of reordering our priorities and re-examining our values. Despite the appearance of ones financial situation, home ownership can very well be a viable option. The key is to confer with professionals around your particular situation. It is essential to find vendors that are willing to address your particular needs because after all, you are "The problem with waiting is that unless your income grows as the same rate or greater than inflation and the rising cost of housing, you are putting yourself at a disadvantage". P.J. Rhae, President Miracle Mortgage

Thing to Consider

- Start immediately – Do not wait
- SAVE, SAVE SAVE and did I mention SAVE
- Confer with professionals and specialists at every given opportunity
- After having met with a professional, determine what you can afford
- Have an A, B, and C, plan
- Above all, BE patient and Have Faith. It can and will happen

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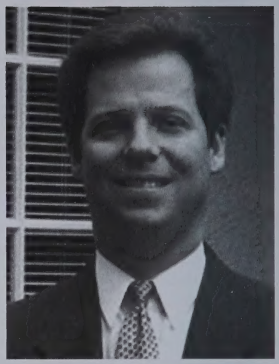

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EMPLOYEE STOCK OPTIONS BASICS

By: Pamela Ayo Yetunde, Financial Consultant

Stock option programs have gained so much popularity that over 10 million* individuals are on the receiving end, hoping to cash in on their new assets. If you are one of the lucky ones holding profitable options, then you know that one of the biggest challenges for any option holder is deciding when to exercise the options and sell the stock for the greatest gain and smallest tax consequence. Taxes due on an exercise and stock sale may be considerable and will vary according to the type of option that is exercised as well as the timing of the exercise. One of the fist things you will need to do is familiarize yourself with the type of stock option you have been granted.

Let's start with some of the basics. An employee stock option is the right to purchase specific company stock at a specific price – the exercise, grant or strike price – within a specified time period. The exercise price is typically the market value of the stock at the time of the grant. The time frame for exercise varies based upon company plan specifics but typically begins one year after grant for a percentage of the grant. An additional option will normally vest each year, until all are vested and can be exercised.

For example, an XYZ employee receiving a grant of 100 stock options in July when the market value of XYZ stock is $64 per share may be able to exercise the first portion, or in this case 20%, of the grant the following July, at the $64 exercise price. An additional 20% could vest each year until all options are vested at year six. The options may expire ten years from grant, after which they can no longer be exercised.

In this example, if the employee chooses to exercise all 100 options at year six, at the exercise price of $64, the earnings will be derived from the "spread" or difference between the exercise price and current market value of the stock. In this case, let's say the stock has increased to $85 per share in the six years since option grant. The earnings are calculated by using $85 (the market value), minus the $64 (the exercise price), leaving $21 per share or $2,100 in option exercise earnings. The individual, however, must now pay taxes and transaction fees on these earnings.

Incentive Versus Nonqualified Stock Options

The two types of stock options are Incentive stock options and Nonqualified stock options. The difference between these alternatives is their tax treatment. Nonqualified stock options are taxed as ordinary compensation income at the time of exercise through payroll withholdings from the spread between the exercise price and market value at the time of exercise. Any subsequent appreciation of the stock is taxed as a capital gain.

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Incentive stock options, on the other hand, may receive preferential tax treatment, with option earnings and stock appreciation taxed at the lower capital gains rate. If you meet special holding period requirements (two years from grant and one year from exercise) you are allowed to treat income or loss from the sale of the stock as a capital gain or loss. However, if you do not meet the special holding period requirements, you may have to claim it as ordinary compensation income.

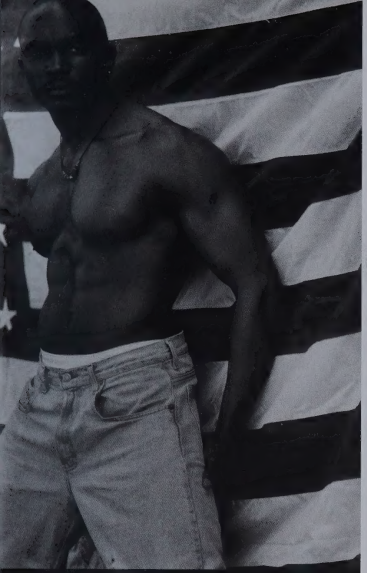
If you are a candidate for the Alternative Minimum Tax (your tax advisor will be able to make that determination), you will need to include the spread at exercise in your calculations. The ability to benefit by the preferable capital gains tax is eliminated, however, when the stock is not held for the required holding period of two years from grant and one year from exercise. Exercising prior to the end of the holding period is termed a "disqualifying disposition," and results in the conversion of both the option earnings and stock appreciation to taxable compensation, which you must report on your tax return, and pay the applicable federal and state income tax.

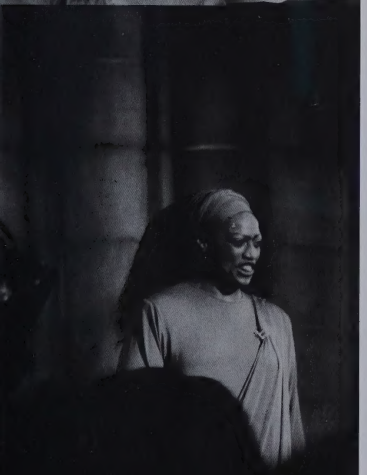
Remember, you should take the time to learn as much as you can about your stock options so that any decision you make is informed and also includes your personal circumstances and financial needs.

**The ESOP Association, Washington, D.C.*

Pamela Ayo Yetunde is a Financial Consultant with Salomon Smith Barney in San Francisco. She is the author of two books on investing. She can be reached at 415-955-1677 or pamela.a.yetunde@rssmb.com. This article is based, in whole or in part, on information provided by the Sales & Marketing Communications of Salomon Smith Barney

"I love them. The fortunate thing for me is that many [subjects] happen to be extraordinary friends. They are people I respect and people that I love".





DUANE CRAMER

All American Photographer - A Success for Our Time

As Written by MacArthur H. Flournoy

The guy who takes a chance, who walks the line between the known and the unknown, who is unafraid of failure, will succeed.

-Gordon Parks, Sr.
American photographer, filmmaker and writer

When entering an artist domain, one never really knows what to expect. The studio loft of Duane Cramer, grasping its share of the San Francisco skyline we were instantly greeted with warmth emanating from the artist himself, and the art that graced the room. The space was alive with the presence of personality, depth and intrigue captured in the faces of people from all over the globe. Photographic images of a Pulitzer Prize winning novelist, a senator, a congresswoman and a choreographer all inviting visitors to come and share a moment in time with them. They are more than present for the viewing. They are present in the room to tell you who they are, or perhaps who they were in that moment of time, when memorialized on film by Cramer's camera.

"I love them. The fortunate thing for me is that many of the personalities happen to be extraordinary friends. They are people I respect and people that I have loved. This provides a very unique opportunity to capture these people on film". In his artist statement, Cramer writes, " My passion is to capture the inner essence
of my subjects on film. The goal of the work I produce is to create change in the hearts and minds of the audience while sparking thought and dialogue".

Transitioning from model to photographer more than sixteen years ago, his craft is entirely self-taught. Still, his work has appeared alongside that of Annie Liebowitz and in publications such as Harper's Bazaar, BLUE®, The Advocate, Q San Francisco and Whazzup Magazine.

An oil painting in the studio amidst the stylish furnishings tells a deeper story. "What most people don't know is that I come from a family where art was appreciated and valued". A portrait of the photographer painted by Cramer's uncle more than thirty years ago, shows his lineage to family, tradition and the art that seems to flow in his blood. "He did that when I was six, as matter of fact, I found that exact shirt I was wearing at the time of that sitting when I was going through some old things" as he lifted the treasured memory from his childhood for ARISE to view.

Duane Cramer

Men and women from all over the world, of varying ethnic origins play in the realm of light, shadow, depth and allure – all in the lens of Cramer's camera

Appreciating the origin of his talent, Cramer did what any well-trained young man does from a good family – introduced guests to the elders of his family. And so he did. Images dating back to the late eighteen hundreds presented Cramer's regal great grandmother of African descent and great grandfather of Germanic Jewish descent. Pulling forth a photograph of a woman whose beauty could rival that of Lena Horne, Cramer offered "This is my Grandmother back in her day". Cramer's warmth is not limited to his photographic subjects, but extends to guest in his home as we were invited to relax on the comfortable sectional seating while he enthusiastically pulled forth volumes of inspiring images taken over the years. Men and women from all over the world, of varying ethnic origins play in the realm of light, shadow, depth and allure – all in the lens of Cramer's camera

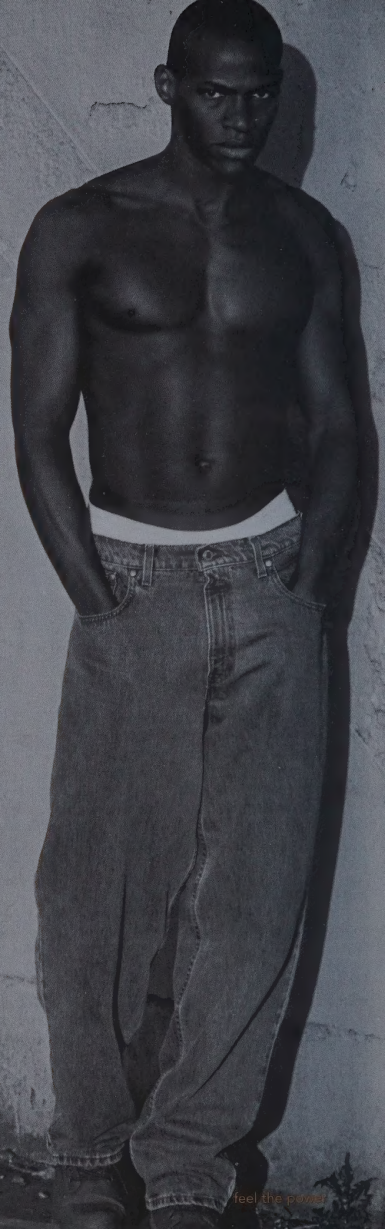
Architecture in Paris, a cobble-stoned road somewhere in France, a crucifix in New Orleans, a rod iron gate all tell of Cramer's distinct appreciation for structure and line. Still it is Cramer's aesthetic vision that lends a particular glimpse into his individual style of photography. "Now this is Errol, one of my dearest friends, he was just sitting right there (pointing to a spot on the floor beneath the breakfast bar) and I saw him turn his head slightly and I knew I needed to have that shot".

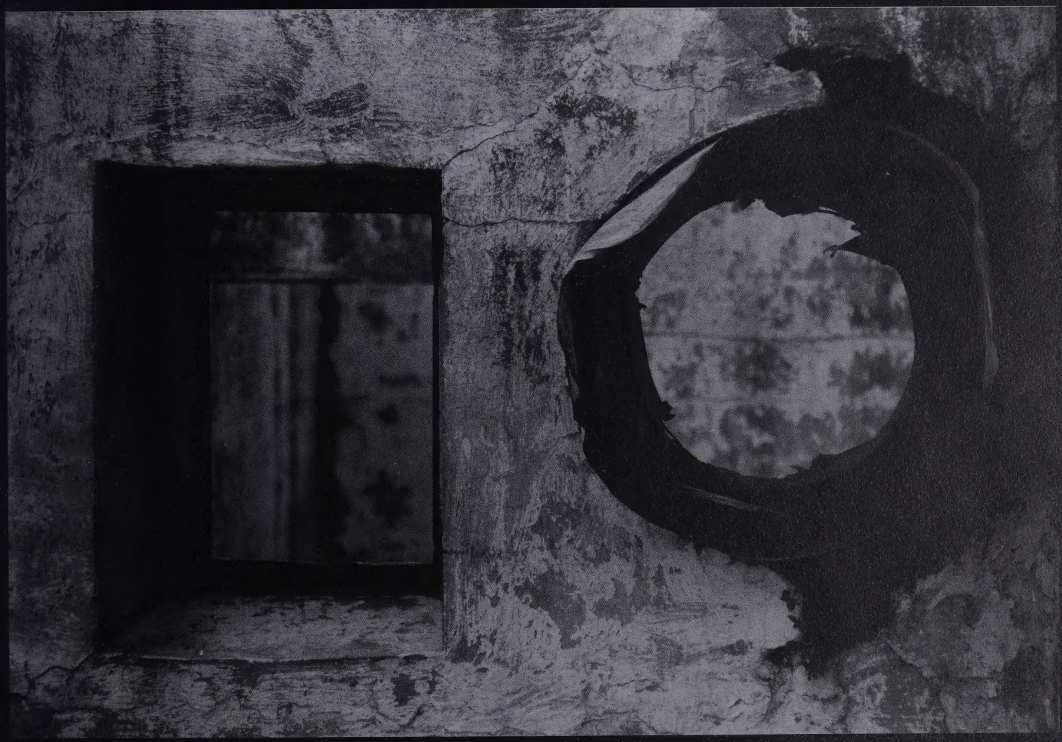
"This man here (pointing to another photograph) isn't he just beautiful" he quipped showing images that appeared to be on the coast of Portugal or some ancient shore. "He just finished dental school, in fact many of my subjects are accomplished people who themselves are artist and professionals". The effusive nature of Cramer's charm causes you to wonder if this is perhaps the way, he elicits such life, spontaneity and depth from his subjects.

The intelligence and strength of character are not loss in Cramer's photography, as often seen in other conventional portrayals of black men on film. Instead, Cramer's work challenges viewers to appreciate the life behind the subject in perhaps ways rarely considered before.

Trite though it may sound, Cramer is indeed a man on mission. "[Cramer's] goal is to create and share beautiful images with an emphasis on people of color. Thereby empowering viewers – and breaking down stereotypes and barriers". Cramer's first exhibit took place August of this year, at Afro Solo Performances coordinated by Founder and Director Thomas Simpson. " I feel it was an honor to have my first photographic exhibit there. It seems like that was a very important starting point from which to launch other exhibits". And other exhibits indeed. December 1, 2000, Cramer will host the Premiere of his exhibit "All American". ARISE was permitted to view some of the selected photographs for the exhibit which promises to be a success. "My intent is to show another side of men perhaps not considered before…a new dimension maybe". And so it is.

Duane Cramer
Dcramer2001@yahoo.com
www.duanecramer.com





"My goal is to create and share beautiful images with an emphasis on people of color"

ngltf

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

Since our inception in 1973 we have worked to eliminate prejudice, violence and injustice against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people at the local, state and national level. As part of a broader social justice movement for freedom, justice and equality, we are creating a world that respects and celebrates the diversity of human expression and identity where all people may fully participate in society.

freedom

justice

equality

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coming in november!

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"When You Learn To Stop Dieting You Start Losing Weight!"

Aside from improving your physical appearance, weight loss is about improving your quality of life.

Do you enjoy being on crash diets? No. Do they improve your health? No! So stop trying to squeeze your life into a diet; rather, learn how to squeeze healthy routines into your life.

Long term successful weight loss can only be achieved through eating routines that are customized for your body and adapt to your lifestyle.

Here Is The Only Guaranteed Way To Lose Weight

The first step to obtaining a healthy weight is knowledge. You need current information if you want to lose weight. Without it, you going to remain stuck in the dieting cycle. The problem is that the latest weight loss discoveries are not readily available to consumers; and that is just the way the diet industry and pharmaceutical companies like it. Making over 33 billion dollars a year on your ignorance, they want you to remain uneducated.

Get Informed

Most people don't know where to get accurate fitness information nor have the time to obtain it. But there is a way to do it. Try researching the medical journals on the internet or enlisting the assistance of a specialist. These are both quick and easy ways to help you get honest information you need.

7 Weight Loss Tips To Get You Started

1. Eat 5-6 meals a day to maintain your lean muscle and reduce the urge to "pig out".

2. Light weight training increase your lean muscle tissue and natural fat burning abilities.

3. Allow you food to digest for a minimum of 2 hours before exercising. This allows your body to use more stored calories (fat) for energy instead of the calories you just ate.

4. Don't start a diet just because you heard it worked for someone else. Diets that work for your friends may not work for you; in fact, they may be counterproductive.

5. Eat more food that are low in calories to increase your metabolism and calorie burning. In the same way your body holds onto food when there is a reduction of calories, it will burn more calories when there is an excess of calories.

6. Feed your body the right types of calories to increase your metabolism to promote efficient weight loss. People who have body types that burn fat more efficiently than carbohydrates should eat more proteins and fewer carbohydrates. Those who burn carbohydrates better than fat will be more successful eating high-carb/low-fat meals.

7. When it comes to the long term, successful weight loss, what you know is more important than what you eat. Instead of continuing to waste your time and money trying every diet on the market, invest that time in learning how your body works.

Happenings with Cedric Brown

Greetings and welcome to ARISE Magazine! I am excited about being included in this premiere issue, and hope to highlight some of The Happenings around the block, throughout the nation, and across the Pond. As an artist/activist, I believe that art has very practical applications in our lives, particularly with respect to bringing together a community and telling its stories. After a lull in the mid 90's, there seems to be a renewed sense of energy and possibility in the Black LGBT/SGL community across the U.S. and internationally. This is a particularly exciting time to be who we are, supremely! Let's get out and about and support these projects! And since I don't get any kickbacks from endorsing these products or projects, you can check them out knowing that the process is pure. J

BLARE: Earlier this year, author and community figure Keith Boykin began publishing an online newsletter, BLARE: Black LGBT Arts Report. BLARE is a collection of newsworthy events, tidbits, and things to look out for in our community, with reports on the literary, performing, and visual arts (including television and film). A different guest editor edits each of the monthly issues. Those of you online might want to get your address on the BLARE listserv by sending an email to BLARE-subscribe@egroups.com or by visiting the website at www.egroups.com/group/BLARE.

DAKAN: I had the pleasure of attending a film screening of Dakan, the first feature film to tackle same gendered love between two African men. The screening was co-sponsored by the Bay Area's Black Gay Letters & Arts Movement (B/GLAM) and Artists Television Access in San Francisco. Cornelius Moore, of California Newsreel, the film's distributor, told me "the director Mohamed Camara, is from Guinea, where DAKAN takes place. In addition to writing and directing, he also plays the father of one of the film's protagonists. DAKAN was Camara's first feature film, but he has made a couple of short narrative films, each dealing with a taboo subject – for example, one of them was about incest in an African village. DAKAN continues along this path."

"The film had its world premiere at the 1997 Cannes Film Festival. It proved to be quite controversial there, mainly among other African filmmakers. Perhaps trying to mask their discomfort with the subject of homosexuality, there were those who criticized the film because they felt it was produced by Europeans (a Frenchman) to titillate them about African sexuality and to exoticize Africans. Camara, who is straight, was not quite prepared for the criticism and did not know how to respond. It kind of showed that he did not do this film with any sort of well-defined political mission. He first presented DAKAN at international film festivals before making its African debut at the Pan African Film Festival in February 1999. Because DAKAN drew lots of attention and reviews when it was shown at Cannes and at gay film festivals in North America in 1998, it was hard to ignore when time came for programming the film at the Pan African Film Festival. The Pan African Film Festival (FESPACO) in Burkina Faso, which takes place every two years and is the signature event for African film.

The Pan African Film Festival (FESPACO) in Burkina Faso, which takes place every two years and is the signature event for African film. This was the first time that an African feature film with a gay theme was presented there. The audience response was very interesting; the film was shown at one of the two very modern air-conditioned theatres at FESPACO, signifying that it was a major event. It was also shown on the next to last day, so there would little time for talking about the film during the festival. Evidently, audiences weren't sure about what they would be seeing. There were gasps and loud whispers of 'Ce sont deux hommes!' – 'It's two men!' At the end of the film, when Manga goes to the village to see Sori, there was applause from some people when Sori appeared with his wife in the village; as if people were happy at the thought, he had become 'normal.' But I wouldn't describe the overall audience reaction to the film as hostile, but it was charged with curiosity."

California Newreel is the largest distributor of African films in North America, and they have a large assortment of African American film projects. Check them out at www.newsreel.org or 415-626-6196 for more information about DAKAN or other Black films.

Preceding DAKAN was a screening of THE HOMECOMING, a film short by Black British Director Topher Campbell. Campbell is also at the center of a Black Queer art movement in Great Britain, serving as the co-founder and director of Rukus Arts. He is in the process of planning a major Black Queer arts festival in London in October 2001. THE HOMECOMING depicted a day in the life of Ajamu, a Black British photographer then living in Brixton, London's equivalent of Harlem. Campbell was gracious enough to field questions from an engaged audience about his work as a filmmaker, theater director, and up-and-coming presence in the arts community of "cool Britannia." Keep an eye out; you'll hear more about Mr. Campbell soon!

NOTES: While we're on the Black British tip, I'm glad to hear that my perennial favorite chanteuse SADE will be blessing us with another CD later this year! And check your record stores for Rachelle Ferrell's latest work "Individuality (Can I Be Me?)." Yet again, she amazes with vocal pyrotechnics and purrs.

That's all for me right now. If you have comments for The Happenings, please email me at clevonbrown@yahoo.com or write care of ARISE magazine. Be well!

The Gathering for the NIA Collective

Oakland CA –The NIA Collective founded more that fourteen years ago will host its annual Gathering November 17 – 19, 2000 on the 1700 acre Walker Creek Ranch in Petaluma CA., entitled "Free to be me in My Community". This years gathering will focus on the issue of identity and expectations associated with labels such as fem or butch.

"In the old days you were butch or fem. Women have evolved beyond that. We no longer need to be caught up in how we identify, so that we can get more focused on being just who we are. We are all women," stated Wendy Herndon, President of NIA for the last four years. The workshops and theme of the conference itself reflects the growing interest in appreciating the breadth of the African American sexually diverse community. There seems to be no single word that defines everyone. And perhaps this is exactly what the Nguzo Saba means by Kujichagulia, Self-determination / Self-definition. The women of the NIA Collective are posing a powerful and compelling question, which in truth could very easily resonate with everyone. Ask yourself, Am I "Free to be me in My Own Community"?

The goal for "The Gathering" is to ensure that all participants have adequate time to relax. According to Herndon, women can participant in everything or nothing. The goal really is just to enjoy one another. In its mission statement the organization writes, "The NIA Collective exists to create and provide a safe and healthy environment for the growth and empowerment of Lesbians of African Descent". In speaking with Herndon, words such as love, honor, solidarity, and integrity are introduced into the conversation as close acquaintances rather than obscure ideals. It is clear from the enthusiasm and conviction in Herndon's voice, that the NIA Collective is more than a social organization but in fact, an organization committed to social change.

Building Infrastructure

Currently the NIA Collective is retooling itself, concentrating on strengthening its infrastructure so that it might be in a better position to attain its goals. "We have not done as much this year as in previous years – we wanted to strengthen our internal operating systems to be more organized' offered Herndon. One such example is the plan for board development activities scheduled for January 2001. Still NIA remains centrally focused on the community offering events such as parenting workshops (as was the case Spring 2000). "We are accessible to the community – we are not a closed shop," offered Herndon. In its continuing effort to stay abreast of the changing interest of its community, NIA conducts Needs assessment, which serve to inform its programming decisions and community-based efforts.

Changing Times

When asked if she has noticed any changes over the years in the women that come to NIA today, versus years before Herndon remarks" "Younger sisters who come to NIA these days seem a lot more energetic, committed to the community, volunteer driven and many are in college." Herndon expressed a measure of reciprocal responsibility for the young women that are joining NIA, wanting to ensure that these young women feel supported, particularly as it relates to the attainment of their professional and academic goals.

Women from all over the country will come together from November 17 –19 for three days. Information on the website for "The Gathering" states " the most important thing we want for women to do that come to this gathering is to relax, enjoy the companionship of other sisters and have some fun".

For more information about NIA or The Gathering, call (510) 869-4403 or Wendy Herndon at (510) 436-6263. NIA website: www.niacollective.org

THE BUBBLES

Written by Asuna Harris for ARISE Magazine
Essays: October 2000

As I look at the world around me, I watch and enjoy as I listen to the voices and expression of various cultures. I have taken particular notice of many African American women who seem to live life in an encapsulated shell, isolated from the reach of an outside world and held captive by their own self-imposed limitations. I call this phenomenon "the Bubble", which consists of living in your own element, rarely ever stepping outside of that environment.

In some instances, our male dominant society is indirectly responsible for placing women inside "The Bubble", via politics or games that are played in the workplace. Other times, power dynamics that exist in our relationships ignite the temptation to withdraw inward. For some, fear is what keeps them in the Bubble, while for others the issue is any number of factors ranging from emotional pain, lack of information, minimal education or sometimes even abuse or violence. The events or circumstances that cause women to enter a bubble are complex and varied; but whatever the reason the goal is usually the same – to survive. Ultimately, it is an individual responsibility to take control of one's life.

When I was little girl, I really did not understand what "The Bubble" was, but I felt its presence and saw its affects. Over the years, as I became a woman, growing, giving and gaining insight, I came to understand the temptation to seal oneself off in a bubble. I learned the bubble was not merely a situational malady, but a condition that affects the spirit and very soul of a woman. I knew in the depths of my heart that I did not want to be sucked into that isolated world. Unfortunately, there are some sisters, who for any number of reasons, have not yet tapped into their inherent inner strength. Consequently, they have allowed themselves to be conformed to other folk's beliefs, values, realities and limitations. Still, it is ultimately an individual's responsibility to take control of one's own life. We can because we do have the power.

What women must realize is that we were born with divine power. Think about it. We have the power to effect change in our lives, if we choose to. With this knowledge, we have the capacity to excel in any arena. Our achievement is not limited to academia or even accomplishment in the corporate world, but we have the power to excel in the creative realm and spiritual sphere in our every day lives.

Personally, I have a passion for the African American woman, who feels stuck, devoid of power in her life. Many of our sisters who have yet to discover their own power are suffocating in "The Bubble". Unfortunately, some women of color are socialized to care for others at the expense of addressing their own needs. Many of our sisters are single parents, and while some are quick to retort, "that isn't rare or novel" – that is exactly my point. How often have these women set aside their own desires, their own dreams and their own aspirations for that of a partner or child? What is most saddening is that, without someone letting that woman know that life need not always be hopeless, - the bubble mentality perpetuates itself.

I remember a family from my childhood who lived in the "Well to do" side of town. The grandmother, who I will call Essie, was stuck with what she knew from her mother and grandmother. She was very strong, like many women who are caught in the grasp of the bubble. They accomplish what they have to for their kids or partners, if there is a significant other around at all. Essie would cook everyday. She made sure her grandkids had everything they needed, as far as food, shelter and clothing. She hid her sorrows inside the bottle and passed on her alcoholism to her daughter. Their "Bubble" consisted of a drink everyday just to cope. The fact was that they saw no other outlets and knew no other ways to escape the pressure of life's challenges. Why is it that so many African American women are torn by addiction?

As I looked at this family, I saw the mother who went to work everyday. Her job was the only place where she could really be free from her situation. Later, returning home from work, the mother was inevitably overwhelmed caring for six children along with her mother. Essie was in some ways a wonderful grandmother but a dysfunctional one, nonetheless. Essie and her daughter needed comfort and relief from abusive marriages but were not able to make the break. They were rendered powerless to find a new life.
I say this to emphasize that many women never feel that they have power without a partner, without a drink, without an education and consequently remain stuck.

Still I know that we have the power to change our lives. Power that lives within us whether we feel its presence or not. Our power can be used in any way we choose. Power is at our disposal. However, if powerless people do not know that they have access to power, how will they discover a new way of living and life that knows no limits? Could it be that we as sisters, as women are here to fortify each other. Maybe even support each other and build each other up in ways that only we can. In life, we as women must use our power to achieve every dream that lies within our heart. We must resist the temptation to accept powerlessness even from ourselves. We were not created for that purpose. We have to continually challenge ourselves to learn new ways to step outside of our comfort zone, and thereby know a new freedom.

CHERISH

How important it is to love yourself
And to know what you stand for
Because there will come a time
When there will be only you to love you
While no one is out there knocking on your door
Knockin at that door saying
"jus stoppin by because I miss you and I care"
Or calling you to touch base
Because of the connection that you share
Sometimes self-love must be sufficient
When you are standing
On some principle within your truth
It is this kind of courage that self-respect
Grows out of by which it is also produced
It is so that there is a season and a time
For every matter or purpose under the sun
Likewise, there is a season when besides you,
Your journey will include no one
It is in these moments of solitude
Where we can really build and fine tune
Where these moments can be productive
And satisfying instead of being filled with gloom
I beg to differ with those who feel
Like we must be with others more often than not
It is in being alone where we hear our loved ones voices
And commune with the Almighty God
Why Jesus often did it!
Great minds need time to make love to their owners
So the next time you find yourself looking only at you
Remember that you're creating a masterpiece too!

Trudi Renae Harper

A la Carte

Fine Living

By Glenn Alexander

ARISE Magazine is dedicated to enriching our readership with information that is both useful and informative. Our purpose is to share a few creative ideas; wonderful travel hints and helpful day-to-day suggestions that assist in making those everyday decisions that are the signature of a comfortable & distinct quality of life. As always, we welcome your input and comments. We also understand that our readers are professional whose lives are filled with business as well as family matters. A LA CARTE is a section to dedicated to fine living. From buying a gift for ones assistant, to planning a birthday party for a 5-year old – A LA CARTE will spotlight a range of creative ideas.

Accommodations

Our readers are seasoned travelers. Therefore, we will spotlight different style hotels and bed & breakfast inns that will take them off the traditional large hotel chain highway.

Hint: For your next business or personal trip, try staying at a boutique style hotel known for its charm and character. You may prefer the larger hotels, so why not select a property to which style and service are still the main focal point. Remember, "the secret to travel is to travel well" and we do that by informing ourselves with today's travel market. Can you pull this Hint off to the side of maybe in a circle of somewhat that it stands out

Dining

We are also a community that loves to dine. Given our fast-paced life, on an average, we dine out at least 5-7 times per week (all meals included). Here you will learn about upcoming new and stylish restaurants that are making a splash around the country or establishments that have reinvented themselves to remain at the top of their industry.

Louis Vuitton's monogram toilette case

Monogram canvas is synonymous with luxury. Louis Vuitton's toilette case is essential to savvy travelers everywhere.

- Lengthwise zipper allows case to be fully opened
- Natural leather trim
- Washable lined interior
- 10" x 4" x 6"

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The Dom Perignon flutes are the most perfect lead crystal vessels for champagne. The "V" shape of the bowl encourages the tiny champagne bubbles to circulate in a way that retains the effervescence and flavor. The absolute clarity of the flutes allows the pure beauty of the champagne to shine forth. Handmade in France.
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For the Chocolate Lover in all of us –Layers of velvety chocolate buried inside luxurious cocoa-dusted Belgian chocolate makes the pyramid a spectacular gift for that deserving colleague or client that went the extra mile. The interior of the chocolate pyramid is rich with bittersweet Belgian chocolate with Grand Marnier, milk chocolate with Framboise liqueur, and white chocolate with Calvados. 17 oz. $55.00

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Bay Wolf

3853 Piedmont Avenue at Rio Vista
Oakland, CA 94611
510-655-6004

Simple in décor but still one of Northern California's hidden treasure "Bay Wolf Restaurant". Located in the shopping district of classic Piedmont area Bay Wolf welcomes, its visitors with a variety of wonderful California-Mediterranean style dishes were fresh ingredients and wonderful presentations are always tradition. For the duck lovers you will be in heaven – carefully prepared dishes leave even the most discriminating critics in awe. From a superb wine list to an excellent staff, Bay Wolf promises to be an evening of pure delight. Reservations are recommended. Entrees priced between $15.00 and $22.00.

Terra

1345 Railroad Avenue (between Adams and Hunt Streets)
St. Helena, CA 94574
707-963-8931

Napa and the wine country – what a great way to enjoy the beauty of Northern California. Terra Restaurant tucked away in the wonderful village of St. Helena. Husband and wife team Hiro Sone and Lissa Doumani discovers beauty and grace from the wonderful flavors and aromas of Franco-California cuisine with Asian accents. From its elegant, stonewall dining room to its impeccable service Terra delivers on the dime. An excellent suggestion for romantic evenings or that one special occasion. Reservations are required and the restaurant is not open on Tuesday. Entrees priced between $16.00 and $25.00.

Blackout

By Akilah Monifa

Black folks are being soundly ignored in the 2000 presidential race. By both major parties.

Until now, African-Americans could count on politicians at least feigning interest in our issues once every four years. But as we enter the 21st century, with the economic disparity between African-Americans and other citizens looming as large as ever, I wonder why we are seeing a Y2K "blackout" on the issues of greatest import to our community.

Before the Republican and Democratic National Conventions, according to the League of Women Voters, Republican Alan Keyes, the only African-American in the race, was the only one with a statement on affirmative action. Keyes, of course, was against it.

Only Republican John McCain had a position paper on work-family issues, another area of interest for many African-American voters. Only Democrat Bill Bradley had a statement on civil rights issues -- although during the primary in South Carolina, he forcefully attacked racial prejudice and called for the state to stop flying the Confederate battle flag above its Capitol. At that time, he was trailing Gore in the polls, and Bradley apparently hoped South Carolina's large black population would rescue him; his sudden attention reeked of pandering.

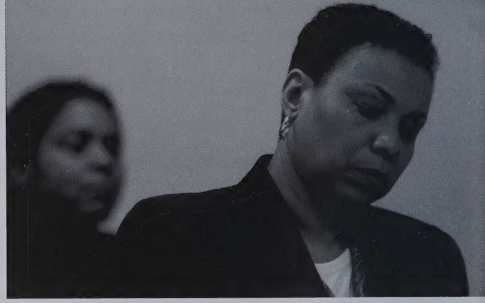
Perhaps the Democrats think the black vote is a fait accompli. In the last three presidential elections, nearly nine out of 10 African-Americans have voted Democratic.

Meanwhile, Republicans are busy courting the Latino vote. For the first time, Latino voters are being blitzed with a multimillion-dollar bilingual ad campaign launched by the Republican National Committee.

In 1996, 44 percent of Latinos voted, compared with 53 percent of African-Americans and 60 percent of white voters, according to Census Bureau data.

Yet the popularly held theory is that whoever wins the Latino vote in California will win the presidency. Latinos account for forty percent of new voters in California.

That leaves African-Americans in a political black hole, as candidates scramble for other voters of color to get them over the hump. Once catered to and wooed -- at least at election time -- African-Americans are for the most part being ignored. We are out; Latinos are in.



Congress Woman Barbara Lee
Photo: Duane Cramer

Opportunity gap

This new form of neglect comes at a time when African-Americans still experience unequal opportunities, despite state and federal legislation. A digital divide looms between white people and people of color: Only five African-Americans and one Latino sit on the boards of companies in Silicon Valley, according to a 1999 survey by the Coalition for Fair Employment in Silicon Valley.

Taxicabs still often will not stop for African-American men. Racial profiling by police abounds as we drive, shop and live. Employment discrimination is widespread, including in the arts. In television's long-running "dry white season," actors of color remain virtually absent on the small screen, despite agreements last year between the NAACP and several networks to increase the involvement of people of color in front of and behind the scenes.

In his famous "I Have a Dream" speech, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said African-Americans were living "on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity."

In the past five years, while much of America has been riding a wave of Silicon Valley-inspired prosperity, a University of Michigan study found that the average African-American household's net worth decreased -- from $8,400 to $7,500.

By contrast, the net worth of the median American household increased 9 percent, to $59,000.

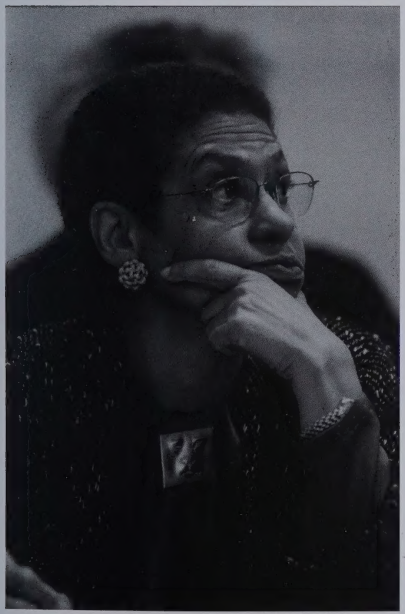
Thirty-seven years after King's speech, it seems that we are still on that lonely island. Given the extraordinarily slow rate of progress, all presidential candidates should be addressing the issues and proposing solutions. But they are not.

The felon issue

In 1998, there were about 9 million African-American voters in the United States with 40 percent of those in the South. Yet on Election Day, nearly 1.4 million voting-age black men, more than one in eight, will be ineligible to cast ballots because of state laws that revoke felons' right to vote. "Here we are, 50 years after the beginning of the civil rights movement, and we actually have an increasing number of African-Americans who are disenfranchised each year," said Marc Mauer of the Sentencing project, which analyzed 1996 Justice Department statistics along with Human Rights Watch.

Disenfranchised black males account for 35 percent of all U.S. citizens now barred from voting because of felony convictions. Two percent of all Americans, or 3.9 million, have lost the right to vote, compared with 13 percent of adult black men.

Nine states impose a lifetime voting ban on convicted felons, and in 32 states, felons can vote after serving their sentence and completing parole.



Senator Eleanor Holmes Norton
Photo: Duane Cramer

Notably Massachusetts, Maine and Vermont - have no prohibition and allow prisoners to vote, although Massachusetts voters will act on a ballot measure in November that would strip prisoners of voting rights.

Six other states impose restrictions based on a felon's prior record or parole status.

More than 2 million people were behind bars last year, according to the Justice Department. Remember there was a time when only white male landowners were allowed to vote.

David Bositis, senior political analyst of the Joint Center for political and Economic Studies, a think tank that researches policy issues concerning blacks and other minorities, said most Americans favor restoring voting rights to felons after they've served their time, citing a survey in which 73 percent of respondents called voting "a fundamental right of citizenship."

Jackson largely silent Even the Rev. Jesse Jackson has been conspicuously absent this election season. He did make a keynote speech at the Democratic convention and humorously pled for America to "keep out of the Bushes." However, in past elections, we could count on him to be an outspoken player and advocate for our issues, regardless of whether he was running. But this time, it seems he has also abandoned us in party politics.

The Associated Press reported that Jackson and his son Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D. -Ill., are withholding endorsement in exchange for a Democratic presidential candidate's promise to support a third Chicago-area airport near the younger Jackson's district.

In other words, party politicians seem content to let King's dream die, and to ignore the plight of their African-American constituents when it is politically expedient to do so.

"Excellence is the best answer to racism," says the elder Jackson, a sentiment repeated among politicians who preach the mantra of "individual responsibility."

I disagree. Individually, plenty of African-American people have made progress since our freedom from slavery and since King's death in 1968. However, the credit for their efforts is not given to the race; the so-called excellent or good African-American is seen as the exception, recognized not as black but as a member of a category in which race supposedly does not matter. Meanwhile, for many African-Americans -- those living under or around that median net worth of $7,500 -- King's dream has been deferred. If it is to become a reality, America needs leadership. Moreover, leadership begins with presidential candidates, who must acknowledge the concerns of African-Americans and propose solutions in their platforms. In addition, even though we may not want to deal with the felon issue, it is also an integral part of our voting rights. The only way to end a "blackout" is to shed light on the issues. We must register, educate ourselves, and vote.

Vice Versa Poetry & Prose

Oakland

I need my blackness close to me.
Smug tight like grandmama's quilt on a chilly mid-morning.
Black like the sentiment when you smell it.
Black like the safety of quiet under eyelids
during some beautiful daydream.
Black like the graying blacklady dreadlock goddess
glance at you on BART
cuz whitefolk's kids are acting "typical"
and you are both grinding your teeth
underneath a polite smile, like:
"they so cute!"
when you know they bad asses
and kicking the back of your seat
and you tryin to sleep!
Real black like you are her gonna get if they don't quit.

Black like the lack of it you sense
across the bridge in that city
with the black mayor
but fewer and fewer and fewer
black people.
Black like our mayor here ain't.

I need my blackness close to me.
Smug like the sunny smile I get from some
headwrapped sistah stridin' round the lake.
Black like the undercurl of my napps.
Black like the rhytmic way we speak and gesture and laugh.

I need my blackness close to me.
Like mirrors reflecting my black back to me
or the depth of my baritone poem.
Black like history ain't in public schools.
Black like the infinite universe
or like black art that has that scent and shine.
And like the ghetto girlz on the corner
That make your eyes roll back and tummy tight
cuz they look a mess and they baby look worse
but they your peoples anyway
and this is Oakland
and the way you like it:
Smug Tight Black.

Tim'm T. West 09/06/00

Ten

Everyone really is born with a special gift

It flows deep, deep, deep throughout

If we never lost this truth ourselves
we wouldn't doubt

We wouldn't doubt that we were someone great

One with purpose and a fulfilling fate

It is when our inner voice waves good-bye
over and over again

That somehow we feel that we can't win

But when the time comes for our eyes
to open for the second time

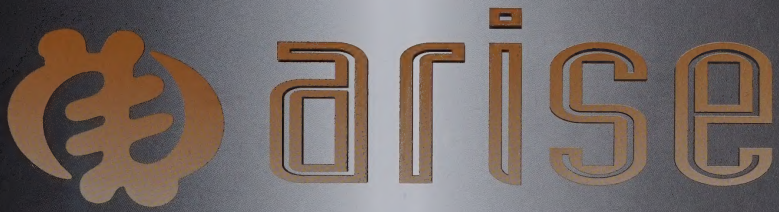
It is on this journey that we realize we are divine

Trudi Renae Harper

The Dream is real, my friends.
The failure to make it work
is the unreality.

Tony Cade Bambara (1939 - 1995)

Come Dream With Us



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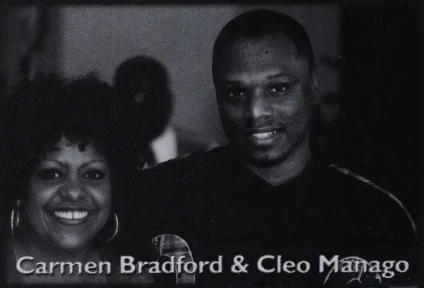
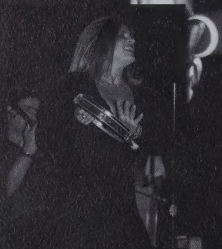

Carmen Bradford & Cleo Manago

African Tango Dancers


Claudia Villela

Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke
Brenda Russell
Cleo Manago

Hope Flood

Chaka Khan & Cleo Manago

Dominique Di Prima

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A New Organization Has Emerged

By Francine Ramsey President/Founder

Zuna

There's a new organization that has emerged in the LGBT community. It is Zuna Institute. Zuna (Zoo-nah) means abundance in Bobangi language of West Africa. The organization was named "Zuna" because of the richness and prosperity of black lesbians that create an abundance of spirit and beauty.

Zuna Institute, a national advocacy organization for black lesbians exists to address the needs of black lesbians in the areas of health, public policy, economic development and education. The vision for Zuna Institute is to call upon our national collective wisdom, strength and courage to improve the quality of black lesbian lives, by eliminating barriers that we face on a daily basis. These barriers are deeply rooted in public policies that encourage homophobia, economic and educational injustices and all other forms of discrimination.

While it is apparent that black lesbians across the country are doing the work to improve the quality of our lives. Zuna Institute wants to build on this work by creating an organization that would advocate our position on issues on a national level. We also want to bridge the gap between organizations and communities to provide a vehicle where we can join forces to become a more visible national community.

This summer Zuna Institute did a nationwide outreach campaign. There were representatives at the Black Prides across the country, and other major events that had a large black lesbian presence. We learned the issues for black lesbians are very diverse depending on what geographic region we live in. We knew the first steps in advocating for the black lesbian community are to understand the needs of the community nationally, to hear the voices of the sistahs nationally. Zuna Institute's recognizes it must create a vehicle to listen to the sounds of concern first hand. The National Black Lesbian Conference will be that vehicle. The conference will invite black lesbians to the table to create a national agenda. The conference will reflect the diversity, wisdom and the strength that we possess within our communities.

Women of all ages will come together to explore our differences and reinforce our similarities. Through this process a national agenda will emerge that will reflect the beauty, the complexities, the creativity and the broadness that exist on a national level. The agenda will be used to create programs and projects that allow Zuna Institute to move the agenda forward.

The National Black Lesbian Conference will be held at the beautiful Atlanta Swissotel in the Buckhead district of Atlanta GA, on Easter weekend April 12-15, 2001. Our theme is "Our Time Has Come" so get ready for hundreds of sizzling black lesbians from across the country that will be in "HOT ATLANTA" for this historic event. Come and let your voices be heard as we set a national agenda. There will be four tracks to the conference focusing on economic development, health, public policy and education. Dr.Kofi Adoma of Detroit urged, " there is a definite need for this conference to happen, we have not come together nationally in over 10 years. There will be networking, sistah circles and lots of sistah fun. There will be speakers, workshops, community forums, dances and a spiritual gospel brunch on Sunday. We urge early registration and hotel reservations.

For more information visit our website at
www.zunainstitute.org or call (510) 482-1671
Zuna Institute 6114 La Salle Ave #527, Oakland, CA 94611

Calendar of Events | November

NGLTF's Creating Change Conference
November 9 – 13, 2000
Westin Peachtree Plaza Hotel
Atlanta, GA

The Gathering
November 17-19, 2000
Walker Creek Ranch
Petaluma, CA

Earl Klugh in concert
November 9-12, 2000
Yoshi's
Oakland, CA

Jean Weisinger – Photo Exhibit
November 1 – December 31, 2000
Java House
Oakland, CA

THANKSGIVING
November 23, 2000

Poetic Experience
November 24, 2000
Oakland YWCA
Oakland, CA

Second Annual BGLAM Writing Retreat
November 11-12, 2000
Headlands Institute
Marin County, CA

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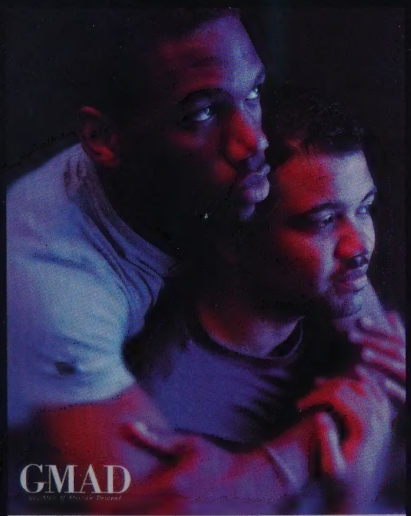

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